

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled)

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Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A The recombinant DNA construct as claimed in claim 1, for expressing at least one heterologous protein in the plastids of higher plants, said construct comprising a chimeric 5' regulatory region which includes a promoter element, a leader sequence and a downstream box element operably linked to a coding region of said at least one heterologous protein, said chimeric 5' regulatory region enhancing translational efficiency of an mRNA molecule encoded by said DNA construct, relative to constructs lacking said chimeric regulatory region, said chimeric 5' regulatory region being PrrnLT7g10+DB/Ec (SEQ ID NO: 14).

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A vector comprising the DNA construct as claimed in claim 4.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

Claim 7 (Cancelled)

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim [[1]] 4, wherein said heterologous protein is expressed from a synthetic bar encoding nucleic acid, wherein said synthetic bar encoding nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 19 and SEQ ID NO: 20.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim [[1]] 4, said at least one heterologous protein comprising a fusion protein.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in